

Tennessee Wetlands Reserve Program

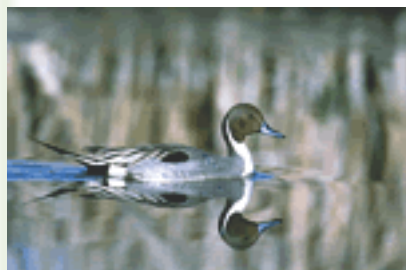
Program Focus

The Wetland Reserve Program in Tennessee is focused on restoring wetlands within several targeted watersheds including the Mississippi River Delta, Obion and Forked Deer Rivers, Hatchie, Wolf, and Duck Rivers.

These large river flood plains have experienced significant historical wetland losses. Maximum wildlife, water quality and public benefits can be achieved from the restoration efforts.

Other watersheds within the state receiving special consideration for restoration include the Nolichucky River, Lick Creek, Emory River, Buffalo River, and Conasauga River,

These wetland restoration areas can provide significant benefits to rare and declining habitats and wildlife species, since many of the imperiled plant and animal species are aquatically based or wetland dependent.



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Overview:

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to restore, enhance, and protect wetlands. Landowners have the option of enrolling eligible lands through permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-share agreements

NRCS WRP goals in Tennessee are to restore and protect wetlands primarily by restoring bottomland hardwoods and reversing all existing drainage systems within the wetland easement area. Emphasis is on restoring native plant communities and hydrology pre-cropping conditions and enhancing the area to maximize wildlife values. Landowners compete for limited funds, and those with the highest environmental benefits are enrolled.

Accomplishments:

During Fiscal Year (FY) 2002, 3 applications were funded with approximately 208 acres of permanent easements and 218 acres of 30-year easements. Approximately 367 acres will be reforested, and about 59 acres of existing forestland will be protected. One easement will consist of extensive hydrologic restoration including the establishment of shallow water areas.

Restoration work completed by NRCS in FY 2002 included the reforestation of 1,330 acres of previously converted wetlands reforestation of 35 acres of upland buffers, and the creation of 134 acres of shallow water marsh. Upon completion of FY 2002 easement filings, Tennessee will have a total of 95 easements with slightly over 15,244 acres protected. A total of 85 easements consisting of 14,261 acres have been recorded as of this date.

Fifty-six (56) easements are permanent, and 29 are 30-year easements. Fifty-three (53) easements consisting of 10,385 acres have been fully restored. Over \$10.3 million have been expended for easement acquisition and restoration activities. An anticipated \$11 million will be expended for the program upon purchase and restoration of FY 2002 easements.

Benefits:

The restoration and long-term protection of approximately 15,244 acres of wetlands and associated buffers will provide benefits including flood storage, sediment filtering, nutrient and chemical filtering, ground water recharge, and wildlife habitat. Native plant communities will maximize benefits for wetland dependent wildlife. Habitat restoration, including riparian and wildlife corridor establishment, will decrease fragmentation of desirable habitat for wildlife.

Tennessee Dollars and Contracts by Congressional District

Congressional District	Fiscal Year 2002		Cumulative Total (95-02)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$0	0	\$72,663	2
District 2	\$0	0	\$0	0
District 3	\$0	0	\$20,696	1
District 4	\$243,900	5	\$917,700	13
District 5	\$0	0	\$0	0
District 6	\$0	0	\$0	0
District 7	\$36,282	2	\$1,480,531	16
District 8	\$1,384,492	14	\$9,508,688	70
District 9	\$0	0	\$0	0
State Totals	\$1,664,674	21	\$12,000,278	102

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